~ 35 ~

The Light to His Darkness

Author's POV:

Arjun looked at Diya, who was fast asleep, leaning her head on his shoulder. He looked at the mehendi artist who applying mehendi on her legs and gave an apologetic look as Diya was sleeping.

"It's okay, sir. Anyways, it was about to complete," said that girl.

After sometime, Diya's mehendi was done.

"Arjun, do you need any help?" Meera asked, coming towards them.

"I'll make her sleep on the bed. See, how she is moving due to discomfort," Arjun said, pointing at Diya.

"Okay, let me help you," said Meera.

After some time, Arjun moved out of the room after making Diya sleep on her bed. Meera and Anjali changed her dress without disturbing her sleep and went out as they had some work.

It was midnight when Meera came to check on Diya. She sat beside her and kissed her face. She covered her with the quilt and adjusted the room temperature. She slept beside her and soon drifted into a deep slumber.

The next morning, Diya woke up with a smile on her face. She moved to freshen up and came out quickly as the puja was going to start soon. Arpita and Sravya came to help her.

"Wow, Akka. Your mehendi is so dark," Sravya said, looking at Diya's hands.

"See, my brother loves you so much," Arpita teased her.

Diya blushed, listening to their teasing.

"Okay, leave. Come on, it's getting late," said Arpita.

Soon, Diya moved to the puja room and saw her brother doing Ganesh puja along with Raman and Ragini. She sat behind them, along with her mother.

"Diya and Sravya go and give aarti to Veeru," said Meera.

Diya and Sravya gave aarti to Veeru and took his blessings.

Time skipped.

The wedding of Veeru and Taara is finished. Diya's face was glowing with happiness, looking at her brother and sister-in-law. They were about to enter the house when everyone stopped them. Diya and Sravya gave them aarti.

"Now give us our money," Diya and Sravya demanded Veeru.

He gave his credit card to them and said,"Can we go now?"

"Nah, it's not that easy. First tell me your names, then we will allow you inside," said Diya.

"Vadina, you say first," said Sravya.

"Why should she say first? Ask your brother to say," said Suhaas.

"Okay, me and my wife, Mrs. Taara Veerendhar Murthy, have come," said Veeru.

"Wohoo!" shouted the youngsters.

"Okay, now it's your turn, Akka," said Maya.

"Me, Mrs. Taara Veerendhar Murthy, has come along with my husband, Mr. Veerendhar Murthy," Taara said, with a cute blushy smile.

"Ohoo, someone is blushing," Avi teased Taara.

Veeru and Taara came inside and moved to the puja room. Taara lit diya and prayed for her family's well being.

"Now feed this sweet to each other," Arpita said, forwarding a bowl of payasam.

Veeru and Taara fed sweet to each other.

"All of you retire to your rooms now. Sleep for some time as we have to wake up around 3 o' clock," said Ragini.

"Sravya, can you go and help Taara?" Asked Meera

Sravya nodded her head and moved to help Taara, while Veeru went to another room to freshen up.

Diya sat on the balcony of her room looking at the sky. Looking at the dark red mehendi on her hands, she remembered her father, who used to apply mehendi to her hands and feet and kiss them after looking at the dark colour of her mehendi. She could see the sadness in her family's eyes. Why not? He is the soul of their family. She picked up the small photo frame in her lap and kissed it lovingly. She caressed the picture with love. It was her father's photo, where he was smiling brightly looking at her mother.

She hugged her knees and burst out crying, remembering her father. She misses him badly. She wanted him to be beside her and do all the rituals. She wanted him to give her hand to Arjun and bless them. She wanted him to say that no matter what happened, he would be beside her. She knew whatever she was thinking was not possible, but no-one would replace her father's place, not even her brother.

She was lost in her thoughts when she felt someone hugging her from behind. She doesn't need to say anything; it's her mother. Meera, who came to sleep, looked around for Diya. She then heard someone crying from the balcony. She moved towards the balcony and saw her daughter crying badly. She got panicked but quickly understood that she must be missing her father.

"Diya, calm down kanna," Meera said, hugging her.

"Why did he leave us, Amma?" Diya asked, hiccupping.

Meera didn't understand what to answer her. Why not? Even she felt the same. Emptiness. The emptiness of not having her husband by her side on the important day of their children's lives. At first, she couldn't digest the fact that he had left her. She had spent many sleepless nights thinking about him and craving his warmth. She used to wear his shirts and sleep. She used to spray his cologne on his pillow and sleep by hugging it to feel him. But some materialistic things can not replace him, right?

Meera composed herself and said,"It's written in our destiny and we can't change it, Diyu. He chose to serve the nation with love, even after knowing that his life would be in danger. If he had chosen another profession, then me and your father wouldn't have met and fallen in love with each other. In the beginning, it used to hurt to see other families celebrating every festival together happily. But then I saw that happiness in his eyes and his voice whenever he succeeded in a mission and his pain when they failed. If it was difficult for me, it would be even more difficult for him. I had my family around me and my kids with me, but there he was alone protecting us. He was there with me at the time of Veeru's delivery, but he couldn't be with me at your delivery. He went on an important mission, and we didn't even talk to each other for three months. He sent Aadil Bhaiyya on behalf of him to be on my side. Whenever he used to go on a mission, I used to pray for God to keep him safe. Even on his last mission, I thought he would come, but didn't expect him to come as a corpse. He cried many times, holding me, for missing important days in our lives. He might be strong for the outer world, but I'd seen him vulnerable and helpless. He sacrificed his life for our country, and we should feel proud of him. Yes, I don't say that it doesn't hurt. His absence in our lives badly hurts me, but then we cannot change destiny. We have to move on with their memories. He will be looking at us from the sky and shower his blessings on us."

Diya hugged her mother tight. How will she live away from her family? Though she can come and see them whenever she wishes, it's not easy for her. Yes, she had stayed away from her family while pursuing her studies, but that was different. Now she will be the daughter-in-law of a family. From now, she has to take care of two families. Yes, she will be the daughter of the Murthy family and will be their little princess forever, but some things do change after the marriage. How will she handle all the responsibilities? Will she be able to keep the harmony of the family? She is a clumsy person who needs her mother at every step. Will she be able to balance her work and the family? She sighed. The journey ahead was definitely not going to be easy, but she would have him beside her. He will be there, holding her hand and being her strength.

Soon, Diya and Meera slept after talking for a while as they had to wake up early.

The next morning, Diya woke up around 3:30 am as she had to get ready for the Ganesh puja. She got down off the bed and thought to do meditation for some time to calm her mind. She moved to the balcony and did meditation for 20 minutes. Meera, who came out after getting ready, didn't find Diya on the bed. Just then, someone knocked on the door. Meera opened the door and saw Maya and Asma standing at the door.

"Did she wake up?" Aasma asked, coming inside.

"Yeah! I think she is on the balcony," said Meera.

"Okay, did you give jewellery to Taara?" Aasma asked Meera.

"No, I need to give. She said that she would take them today," said Meera.

"Keep them outside. I'll go and give them to her," said Aasma.

"Wait then. Maya, will you come with me?" said Meera.

Maya nodded her head and followed Meera. Meera took Diya's outfit and jewellery and placed them on the bed while Maya organised them. She then took Taara's jewellery and kept it on the bed.

Meera took a box and caressed it lovingly.

"Will you ask Taara to come here once?" Meera asked Aasma.

Aasma nodded her head and moved out of the room. Just then, Diya came inside and moved to freshen up as it was getting late.

"Make it fast, Diyu, otherwise we will get late," shouted Meera.

Taara and Aasma came inside. Meera looked at her daughter-in-law, who was looking beautiful in her Kanjeevaram saree.

Meera made her sit on the bed and gave Taara the jewellery box and said,"It was gifted to me by your father-in-law on our engagement day. From now, this is yours. Please take care of them."

"Why don't you give them to Diya vadina? She has more right on them than me," said Taara.

Aasma and Taara smiled, listening to her.

"But your father-in-law told me to give them to his daughter-in-law, Diya also knows about it. So, from now it's your responsibility to take care of them," said Meera.

"But," said Taara.

"If I want, then I will take them from you. But they are yours," Diya said, coming out of the closet.

Taara sighed as they wouldn't listen to her. She looked at them and caressed them.

"Uncle's selection is superb atta," Maya said, looking at the jewellery.

"Of course, that's why he chose my bhabhi," said Aasma.

Meera smiled, listening to her words and Taara,"Did you like them?"

"These are so beautiful and simple," said Taara.

"Just like you, I'm not a big fan of heavy jewellery," said Meera.

Soon, Diya and Taara got ready with the help of Maya, Aasma, and Priya.

Diya sat to do the Ganesh puja along with Veeru and Taara, while Arjun sat to do the Ganesh puja along with Jai and Janaki. Half the family is on Arjun's side, and the rest is on Diya's side.

After puja, Diya and Arjun retired to their respective rooms to rest for some time.

In Arjun's room:

Arjun was sitting on the swing on his balcony. Ajay, Prem, and Yash were telling him something, but he didn't hear any of their words. He was nervous and afraid of the upcoming responsibilities. Murthy and Siddiqui's family were always fond of him from the start. They accepted his past and were ready to give their princess to him. Will he be able to keep up with their expectations? No matter what, he was still stuck with his past, which was nothing but a mistake. A mistake that he has committed knowingly. He has hurt his family and his friends, when all they thought was his happiness. The people who he hurt the most were his sisters and his cookie.

He fought with Arpita many times, as she never liked Chytra. And because of him, Rajesh entered Maya's life. Yes, his sister may not hold any grudges against him, but that's true. All these things wouldn't have happened if he hadn't loved Chytra. But what's the use of thinking about it now when the damage has already been done?

And then his cookie. He insulted her and scolded her. In the past, he never took a stand for her when Chytra mocked her unnecessarily. Yet she is the one who helped him come out of that trauma. She was the one who held his hand and showed him the right path.

Will he be able to keep her happy? Will he be able to take care of her and love her? Whatever may happen, he will stand by her side, holding her hand. She is the ray of light in his dark life. She is " **The light to his darkness**". She is his cookie, and he is her Jun. He will be with her in all her ups and downs and shower her with all his love. Love! Does he love her? He doesn't have clarity about his feelings, but he is sure about one thing. He can not see tears in her eyes and her tears prick his heart.

"Oh my God, Ajju! Didn't you get ready yet. Make it fast, we are getting late," Revathi said, coming inside his room, giving a break to his thoughts.

Arjun nodded his head and moved to change his clothes. Yash and Prem stayed there to help him.

After some time, Arpita put kalayana tilakam on his forehead and a black dot on his right cheek while Maya was applying parani to his feet.

Janaki and Jai entered the room. There eyes brimmed with tears as they looked at Arjun as a groom.

"Arjun, after some time, you are no longer going to be single. Diya is going to come with you leaving her family and everything behind. Be on her side and never let her down. Trust, respect, and communication are very important in any relationship. Never let your relationship crumble because of misunderstandings. Respect her, understand her, and mostly love her. Never, never take her for granted. I know, we do not need to say you. But, it's our responsibility to tell you. Please, come out your past, Arjun. Welcome your present and future wholeheartedly with a smile. Trust me, Arjun, no-one will love you and take care of you like, Diya. But, what about you? Think about it once, Arjun. You are going to start a new life, please leave whatever happened in the past behind. You cannot change it, but don't let your past affect your present and future," said Jai.

Arjun hugged his father and tight. Janaki looked at them with a smile.

"Arjun, make it fast. They are call the groom," said Ajay coming inside his room.

"Are you ready?" Janaki asked him.

Arjun nodded his head and moved out.

At the entrance of the altar, Veeru washed Arjun's legs and brought him inside. Arjun moved to the mandap and started doing Ganesh puja.

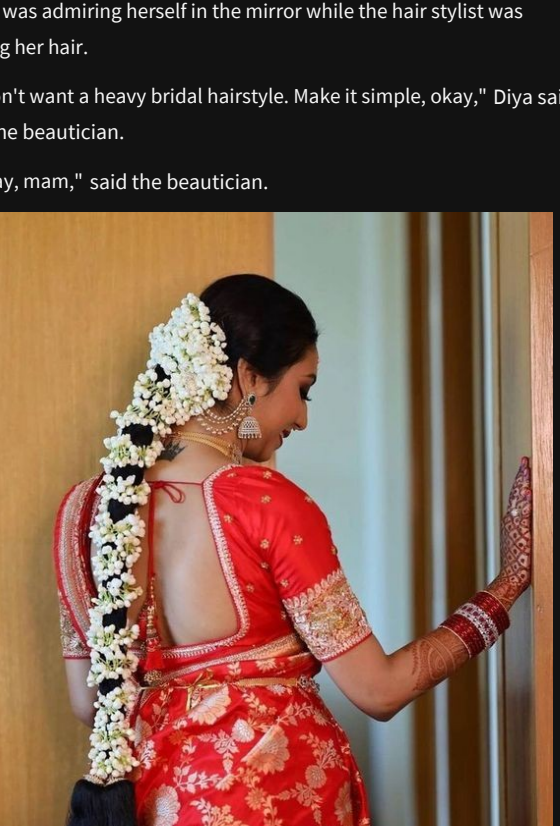
On the other side,

Diya did Gauri puja and moved to her room to get ready. Sravya, Priya, and Aasma stayed with her to help her along with a beautician. looked at herself in the mirror. She was dolled up as a bride and was looking ethereal in red Kanjeevaram saree.

Diya was admiring herself in the mirror while the hair stylist was doing her hair.

"I don't want a heavy bridal hairstyle. Make it simple, okay," Diya said to the beautician.

"Okay, mam," said the beautician.



After sometime, someone knocked on the door. Aasma went and opened the door and saw Meera standing there with Ahmed and Razia.

Diya stood up and twirled around and asked,"How am I looking?"

Meera and Razia got emotional looking at her as a bride. Ahmed held Razia's hand and caressed it, making her calm down.

"You are looking like a pari, beta," Meera said, applying kohl behind Diya's ear

She then repeated the same with Sravya and Priya.

They were talking when Yash, Prem, Sameer, and Rehan walked inside.

"They are calling the bride," said Rehan.

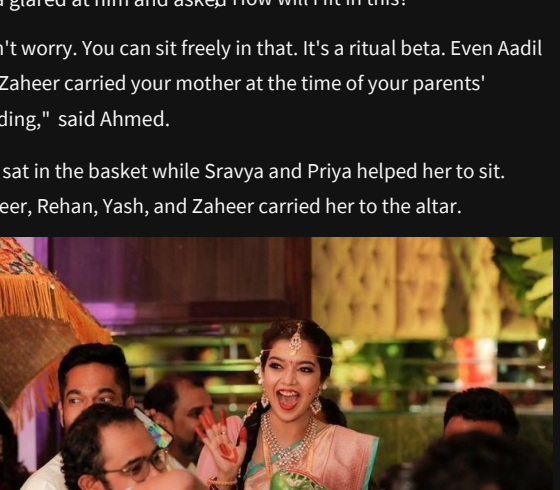
Diya took a deep breath and composed herself. She looked herself in the mirror finally and nodded her head.

"You have to sit in this," Rehan and Sameer said, pointing at the basket.

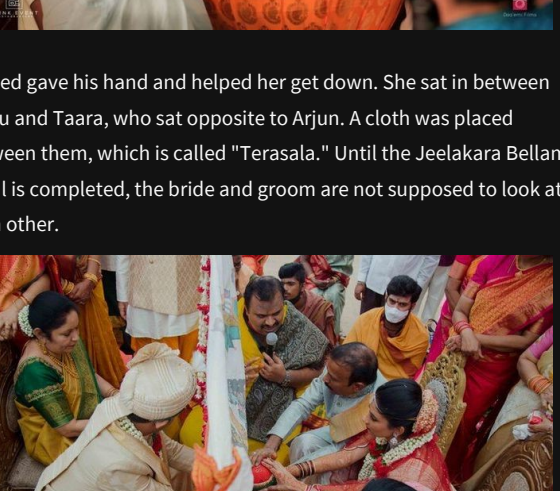
Diya glared at him and asked,"How will I fit in this?"

"Don't worry. You can sit freely in that. It's a ritual beta. Even Aadil and Zaheer carried your mother at the time of your parents' wedding," said Ahmed.

Diya sat in the basket while Sravya and Priya helped her to sit. Sameer, Rehan, Yash, and Zaheer carried her to the altar.

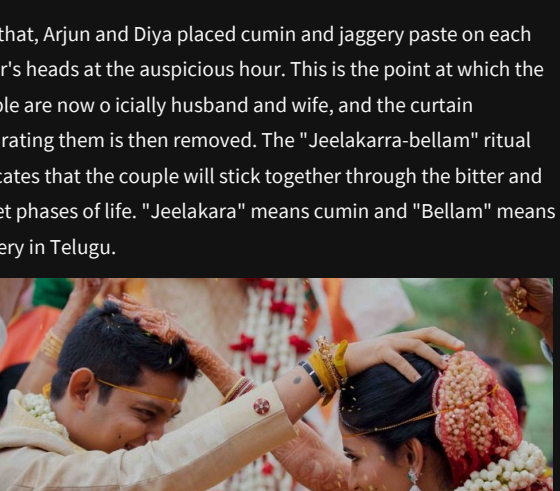


Ahmed gave his hand and helped her get down. She sat in between Veeru and Taara, who sat opposite to Arjun. A cloth was placed between them, which is called "Terasala." Until the Jeelakara Bellam ritual is completed, the bride and groom are not supposed to look at each other.

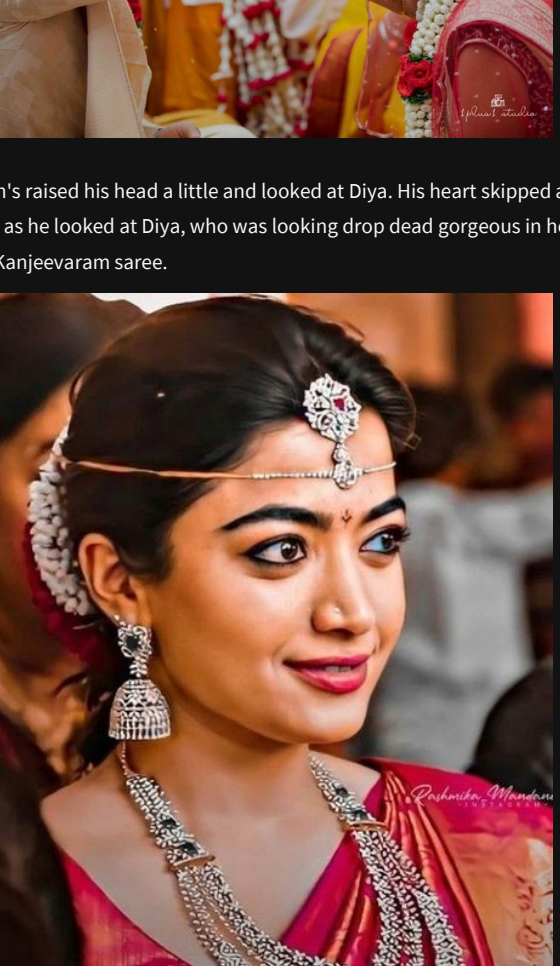


Veeru and Taara washed Arjun's legs as a part of "Kanyadanam". This ritual is performed by the bride's parents. After washing the groom's feet, they gave Diya's hand to Arjun as a part of "Panigraham." The groom promises to love, respect, and protect his bride for life.

After that, Arjun and Diya placed cumin and jaggery paste on each other's heads at the auspicious hour. This is the point at which the couple are now officially husband and wife, and the curtain separating them is then removed. The "Jeelakarra-bellam" ritual indicates that the couple will stick together through the bitter and sweet phases of life. "Jeelakara" means cumin and "Bellam" means jaggery in Telugu.

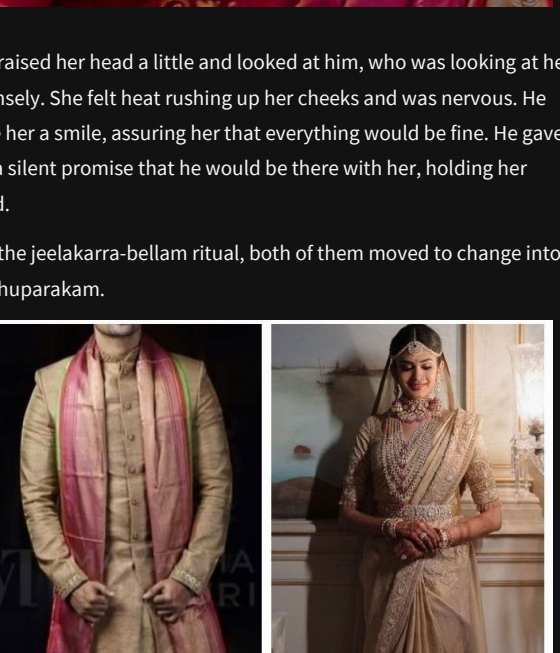


Arjun's raised his head a little and looked at Diya. His heart skipped a beat as he looked at Diya, who was looking drop dead gorgeous in her red Kanjeevaram saree.

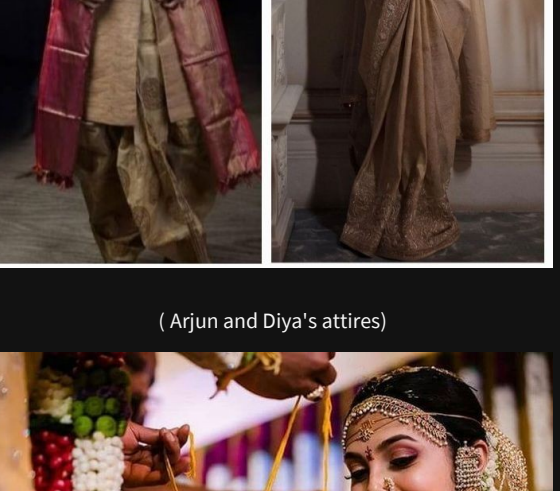


She raised her head a little and looked at him, who was looking at her intensely. She felt heat rushing up her cheeks and was nervous. He gave her a smile, assuring her that everything would be fine. He gave her a silent promise that he would be there with her, holding her hand.

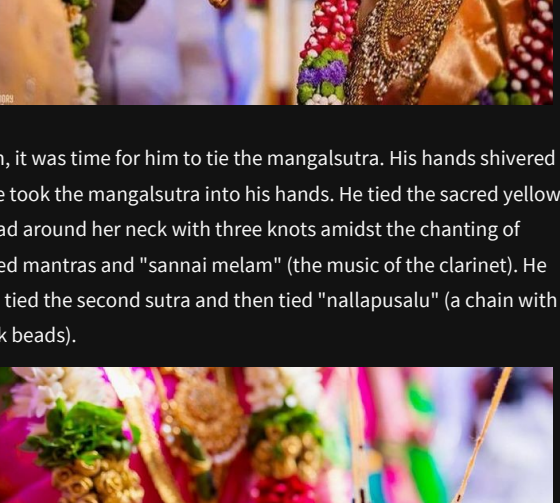
After the jeelakarra-bellam ritual, both of them moved to change into Madhuparakam.



(Arjun and Diya's attires)



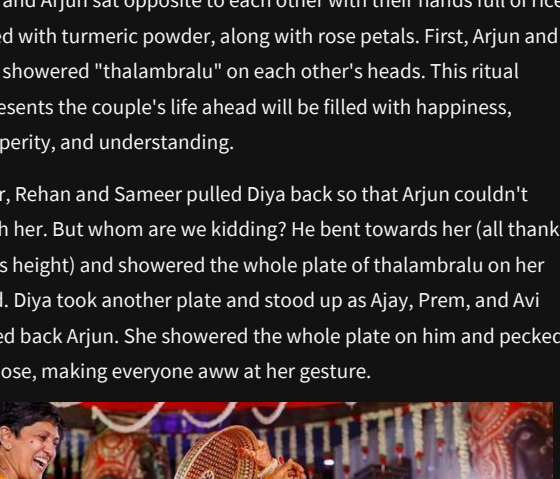
Soon, it was time for him to tie the mangalsutra. His hands shivered as he took the mangalsutra into his hands. He tied the sacred yellow thread around her neck with three knots amidst the chanting of sacred mantras and "sannai melam" (the music of the clarinet). He then tied the second sutra and then tied "nallapusalu" (a chain with black beads).



He applied the vermilion to her hairline and kissed her forehead while she closed her eyes, feeling the moment. She felt her heart heavy as she looked at her mangalsutra. She caressed it, and then the realisation hit her that she was no longer Miss. Diya Ananth Murty. From now on, she is Mrs. Diya Arjun Reddy.

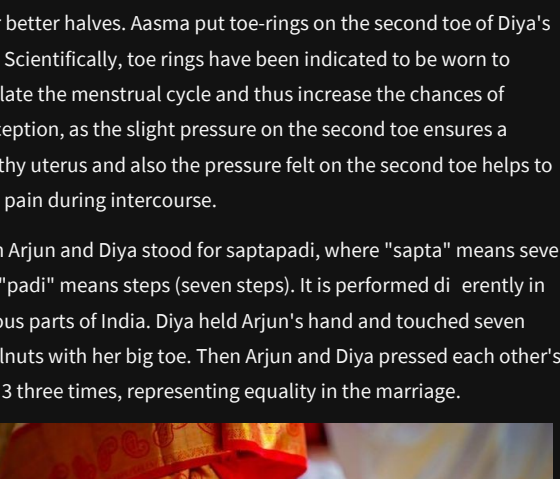
Diya and Arjun sat opposite to each other with their hands full of rice mixed with turmeric powder, along with rose petals. First, Arjun and Diya showered "thalambralu" on each other's heads. This ritual represents the couple's life ahead will be filled with happiness, prosperity, and understanding.

Later, Rehan and Sameer pulled Diya back so that Arjun couldn't reach her. But whom are we kidding? He bent towards her (all thanks to his height) and showered the whole plate of thalambralu on her head. Diya took another plate and stood up as Ajay, Prem, and Avi pulled back Arjun. She showered the whole plate on him and pecked his nose, making everyone aww at her gesture.



Then, both of them exchanged garlands, accepting each other as their better halves. Aasma put toe-rings on the second toe of Diya's legs. Scientifically, toe rings have been indicated to be worn to regulate the menstrual cycle and thus increase the chances of conception, as the slight pressure on the second toe ensures a healthy uterus and also the pressure felt on the second toe helps to ease pain during intercourse.

Then Arjun and Diya stood for saptapadi, where "sapta" means seven and "padi" means steps (seven steps). It is performed differently in various parts of India. Diya held Arjun's hand and touched seven betelnuts with her big toe. Then Arjun and Diya pressed each other's toes 3 three times, representing equality in the marriage.



The seven steps represent the seven vows of marriage.

1) to nourish each other.

2) to grow stronger together

3) to preserve our wealth.

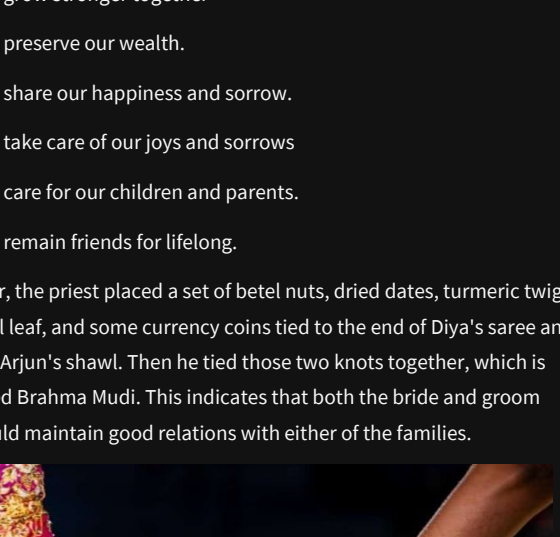
4) to share our happiness and sorrow.

5) to take care of our joys and sorrows

6) to care for our children and parents.

7) to remain friends for lifelong.

Later, the priest placed a set of betel nuts, dried dates, turmeric twig, betel leaf, and some currency coins tied to the end of Diya's saree and also Arjun's shawl. Then he tied those two knots together, which is called Brahma Mudi. This indicates that both the bride and groom should maintain good relations with either of the families.



"Vadina, let's see who wins this game," said an excited Siri, looking at Diya.

"Of course, my sister will win," said Veeru.

"My brother will win," said Arpita and Maya together.

Well, now comes the most fun-filled ritual in a Telugu wedding, which is the "finding the ring" ceremony. In this ritual, two rings are dropped (one gold and one silver) inside the water pot. The bride and groom put their right arms into it to see who picked up the gold ring first. It is the best of three series. Whoever finds the gold ring twice is the winner and is said to have the upper hand in the marriage. This ritual is equally fun for the families as they cheer for their respective side.

Arjun and Diya were all set to take the ring. The priest dropped both rings in the pot and Diya and Arjun started searching for them. First, Diya took out the ring happily, but her smile dropped as she picked up the silver ring. Arjun smirked at her and showed the gold ring in his hand.

Diya looked at him, narrowing his eyes, and said,"There are still two more chances."

Arjun smirked and said,"Let's see."

The priest dropped the rings again and the fight again began. This time, Diya found the gold ring, making Arjun pout.

Next, the priest pretended to drop rings. Arjun and Diya started searching for rings. After a while, they realised that the priest didn't drop rings. Everyone laughed looking at them. This time, the priest dropped rings. Finally, after fighting for some time, they both pulled the gold ring together, leaving the silver one in the pot.

Arjun and Diya came out of the altar along with the others. The priest showed him the brightest stars first and then the faint Arundhati star with the Vashishta star. The husband shows the Arundhati star to his wife and wishes to remain loyal and devoted to each other like Vashishta and Arundhati.

The final ceremony in a Telugu wedding is called Appaginthalu, where the bride's family officially hands over the bride to the groom's family. They decided to do it at Murty Mansion.

Arjun and Diya held each other's hands and looked at each other, smiling brightly. They are ritually and officially Mr. and Mrs. Arjun Reddy now.

Arjun and Diya were about to enter the house when Arpita, Maya, and Siri stopped them. Three of them gave aarti to them and put vermilion on their foreheads. This is done to keep them safe from the evil eye and to seek God's blessing.

Three of them put their hands in front of him with a stupid grin plastered on their faces.

Arjun looked at Yash and asked,"Bava, where is my wallet?"

"It's with Aashi. She kept it in her bag," said Arjun.

"Here, take it," Aashi said, giving the wallet to Arjun.

Arjun took out his two credit cards and gave them to his three sisters.

"While shopping, don't forget about the girl in the middle," Arjun said, pointing at Maya.

"Don't worry, three of us will spend equally," said Arpita.

"Now that I've given my cards to you, can we come inside now? I badly need to take a nap now," said Arjun.

"First, tell us your names. Then we will allow you inside; otherwise get ready to spend the whole night in this chilly weather," said Maya.

"Don't be silly, my dear sisters. Don't you know our names?" Arjun asked, making an irritated face.

"Anna, we know that you want to spend time with my Vadina. But we are not allowing you inside until you say your names," said Siri.

"Okay, me and my wife, Diya, have come," said Arjun.

"Come on, now it's your turn, Diya," said Arpita.

"Me, Mrs. Diya Arjun Reddy, have come along with my husband, Arjun Reddy," said Diya.

"Can we go at least now?" Asked Arjun.

"Vadina put your right leg first and enter," said Siri.

Diya and Arjun stepped inside together, holding each other's hands. Diya moved to the puja room, lit a lamp, and prayed for her family's happiness and prosperity.

Arjun and Diya sat on the chair with youngsters surrounding them.

"Now feed this sweet to each other," Aashi said, forwarding a bowl of carrot halwa.

"Shall I bring food for you both?" Janaki asked them.

"No attayya. I'll just have some milk," said Diya.

"Even me," said Arjun.

"Okay, I'll send it to your rooms. Now, go and rest," said Janaki.

"Maya, Siri, go and help Diya," said Anjali.

Maya and Siri nodded their heads and moved to help Diya.

In Arjun and Diya's room:

Arjun moved to another room to freshen up.

Maya was organising the jewellery while Siri was setting Diya's hair.

"Vadina, where shall I keep all this jewelry?" Asked Maya.

"There are boxes in my suit case. Keep them in boxes and place them in the locker," said Diya, while removing her make-up.

"I'll go and have a shower," said Diya.

Maya nodded her head. She placed all the jewellery in the locker. She then took a neck piece and a simple and light-weight saree. Siri was folding Diya's wedding saree, as she had to wear it again on Satyanarayan vrath.

Soon, Diya came out after having her shower. Maya helped her with the saree.

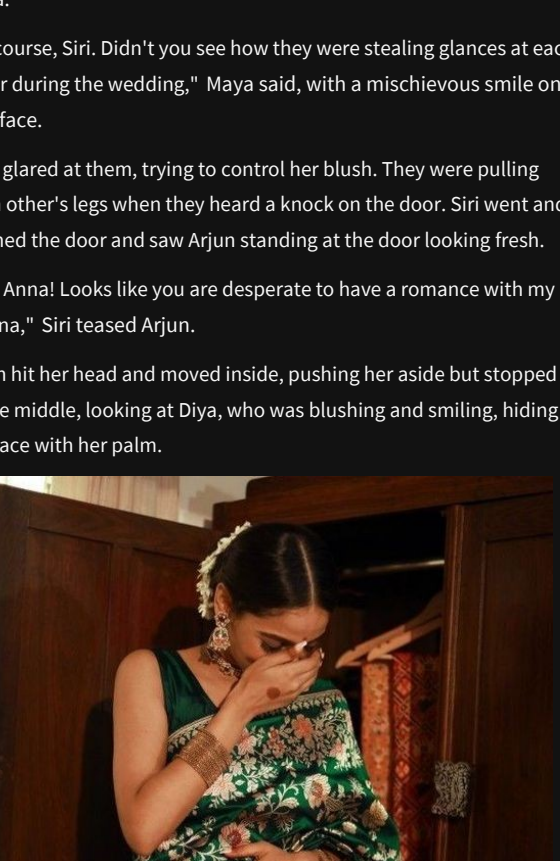
"Your face is glowing, Vadina. Is it because of my brother?" Siri teased Diya.

"Of course, Siri. Didn't you see how they were stealing glances at each other during the wedding," Maya said, with a mischievous smile on her face.

Diya glared at them, trying to control her blush. They were pulling each other's legs when they heard a knock on the door. Siri went and opened the door and saw Arjun standing at the door looking fresh.

"Oh, Anna! Looks like you are desperate to have a romance with my Vadina," Siri teased Arjun.

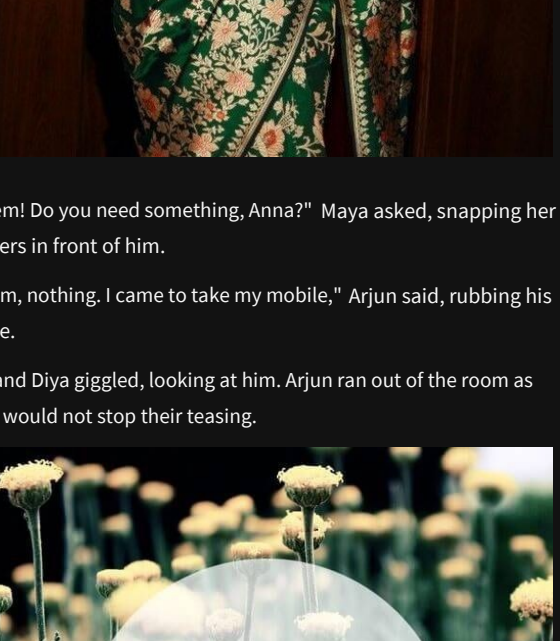
Arjun hit her head and moved inside, pushing her aside but stopped in the middle, looking at Diya, who was blushing and smiling, hiding her face with her palm.



"Ahem! Do you need something, Anna?" Maya asked, snapping her fingers in front of him.

"Umm, nothing. I came to take my mobile," Arjun said, rubbing his nape.

Siri and Diya giggled, looking at him. Arjun ran out of the room as they would not stop their teasing.



Hello guys!!!

I know. I know that I'm super late this time. But what to do? This author of yours is stuck with her work.

Anyway, how is the update? Do let me know about your views.

Finally, Arjun and Diya are hitched.

Are you excited about their journey?

I'll definitely try to update quickly, but I can't promise.

Keep smiling and take care🤍

Thank you for reading!
VOTE · COMMENT · SHARE
@Kiran72

Continue reading next part